UNITED NATIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS

THIRTY-NINTH YEAR

2564th MEETING: 13 DECEMBER 1984

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2564)	1
Expression of thanks to the retiring President	1
Adoption of the agenda	1
The question of South Africa: Letter dated 13 December 1984 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 421 (1977) concerning the question of South Africa to the President of the Security Council (S/16860)	1

NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/...) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements* of the *Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

2564th MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 13 December 1984, at 4.30 p.m.

President: Mr. Ahmed Tawfik KHALIL (Egypt).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Burkina Faso, China, Egypt, France, India, Malta, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2564)

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. The question of South Africa:
   Letter dated 13 December 1984 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 421 (1977) concerning the question of South Africa to the President of the Security Council (S/16860)

The meeting was called to order at 4.50 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

1. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* As this is the first meeting of the Council for the month of December, I should like at the very outset to pay a tribute, on behalf of the Council, to the President for the month of November, Mr. Ling Qing, representative of China, for the great diplomatic skill, wisdom and courtesy with which he guided the Council's business last month. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing to him admiration and deep appreciation.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question of South Africa:
Letter dated 13 December 1984 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 421 (1977) concerning the question of South Africa to the President of the Security Council (S/16860).

2. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of South Africa in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. von Schirnding (South Africa) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

3. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* Council members have before them document S/16860, which contains the text of a letter dated 13 December from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 421 (1977) concerning the question of South Africa, transmitting the text of a recommendation by the Committee to the Council.

4. Mr. van der STOEL (Netherlands): I should like to begin, Sir, by offering you our congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. We are particularly pleased to see in the Chair not only a representative of a country with which the Netherlands maintains such close and cordial relations, but also a colleague whose skill and experience we all have come to appreciate.

5. May I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Ling Qing for his wise and skilful handling of the presidency of the Council during the month of November.

6. More than a month ago, the Security Council Committee on the arms embargo against South Africa, established by resolution 421 (1977) under the chairmanship of Mr. Shah Nawaz of Pakistan, met at the request of my delegation to consider a proposal to expand the existing arms embargo embodied in resolution 418 (1977) by a ban on arms imports from South Africa. Over the last few years the Netherlands has advocated such a step, in the Council as well as in other forums, as a necessary complement to resolution 418 (1977). It is a well known fact that since the establishment of the mandatory arms embargo South Africa has embarked on a major effort to build up its own capacity to manufacture arms and thus to circumvent the provisions of the embargo. In fact, the South African Government has increasingly felt the need to launch an export drive for its self-produced weapons in order to earn back part of its investments and to enhance the economic viability of its arms industry.

7. The South African Government does not conceal the fact that it seeks to become self-sufficient in military equipment and to create a broad-based defence industry which is capable of manufacturing everything the South Africa Defence Force requires. On the contrary, it has occasionally boasted of its prowess in this regard. It is becoming clear, therefore, that South Africa's intensified efforts to build up its capacity to manufacture armaments undermines the effectiveness of the mandatory arms embargo against that country. Against this background, my Government has always taken the position that high priority must be given to strengthening the existing arms embargo and to enhancing its effectiveness. In our view, this field deserves our particular attention and our common endeavour as members of this Council.

8. In recent months the tensions generated by South Africa's system of racial discrimination have erupted into a wave of civil rights strikes, deaths, mass arrests and detentions, and destruction. Voices of protest, including those of labour leaders and other opponents of *apartheid*, were stifled while the South African police and army carried out raids on the black townships of the Vaal Triangle. In response to this aggravation of the situation in South Africa the Council, by its resolution 556 (1984) adopted less than two months ago [*2560th meeting*], condemned the South African Government's resort to violence in quelling these disturbances and demanded its immediate cessation. On that occasion my delegation made it clear that in our opinion these dramatic events will inevitably recur in the future unless the root causes of South Africa's endemic unrest are addressed in a decisive manner. It is our firm belief, therefore, that the international community must keep up the pressure on the South African Government until it shows signs of readiness to initiate a process of fundamental reforms, leading to the elimination of *apartheid*. As long as the South African Government refuses to heed the repeated appeals of the United Nations to abandon its *apartheid* system and continues to disregard the unanimous opinion of the world community in this respect, it remains our duty, as members of the Organization, to deny South Africa the means by which to impose its racial policies and to destabilize neighbouring States.

9. The United Nations has long been aware of this need. As early as 1963 the Council adopted resolution 181 (1963) which proclaimed a voluntary arms embargo against South Africa.

10. The establishment of the mandatory arms embargo by resolution 418 (1977) undoubtedly constituted a milestone in the history of the Organization's efforts to persuade South Africa to desist from its aggressive policies and finally to comply with the demands of the world community to dismantle *apartheid*. In order to reinforce resolution 418 (1977), a further measure was taken in December 1977 with the adoption of resolution 421 (1977). By that resolution, the Council established a Committee, consisting of all its members, with the task, *inter alia*, of studying ways and means by which the mandatory arms embargo against South Africa could be made more effective, and of making recommendations to the Council. On 19 September 1980, the Committee published a report [*S/14179*] containing, in chapter III, its conclusions and recommendations. One of those recommendations expressed the view that no State should contribute to South Africa's arms production capability by purchasing arms manufactured in South Africa.

11. The Council now has before it a recommendation, adopted by consensus by the Security Council Committee, which requests all States to refrain from all imports of arms from South Africa and which, moreover, reaffirms resolution 418 (1977). This recommendation is the result of extensive consultations with other members of the Council. I wish to thank members for the support, patience and quiet resolve to achieve consensus which they have shown throughout this long process.

12. My delegation feels that the Committee's recommendation, though of a non-mandatory character, represents a concrete step forward. Today, for the first time in many years the Council does not merely denounce South Africa's policies but effectively concerns itself with some form of concrete, specific action. In so doing, the Council would also express its unwavering commitment and undiminished adherence to resolution 418 (1977) and stress the need for the strict application of all its provisions. Moreover, in the recommendation before us the Council requests all States to refrain from imports of arms, ammunition of all types and military vehicles produced in South Africa and strictly to apply all its provisions. Finally, it requests the Secretary-General to report on its implementation to the Security Council Committee before 31 December 1985.

13. Having introduced the recommendation for adoption by the Council, I will end by expressing my delegation's hope that our common stance will be seen as an unmistakable signal that *apartheid* must urgently give way to a society in South Africa based on respect for human rights, dignity and equality for all its citizens.

14. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic)*: It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the recommendation of the Council Committee contained in document S/16860. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the proposed recommendation to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

The recommendation was adopted unanimously [*resolution 558 (1984)*].

15. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic)*: I shall now call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the vote.

16. Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): You, Mr. President, are a man of many chairs, and we admire

the way in which you sit in all of them. We congratulate you on your accession to this one, and we welcome the chance of sitting under your guidance for the month of December. You and your Government have our full confidence.

17. We are all most grateful to our colleague, the representative of China, for his quiet and effective management of our affairs in November, including the triennial election of members of the International Court of Justice.

18. The recent turmoil in South Africa has claimed many lives. The situation there continues to be tense and highly charged. It is not a situation to which the Council can remain indifferent. The continuing tragedy of South Africa remains a source of grave concern to us all.

19. It has been the constant view of successive British Governments that *apartheid* is unacceptable morally and was bound to prove unworkable in practice. We accordingly believe that it is right to maintain strong pressure on the South African Government, both bilaterally and through the United Nations, to abandon and dismantle *apartheid*. The arms embargo adopted under Council resolution 418 (1977) has been an appropriate instrument of such pressure and has been implemented strictly in British legislation and by British courts.

20. The most recent events in South Africa have caused great distress to the British Government, in Parliament and among the British public, as they have to many other countries, and particularly to our friends and partners in Africa. It is right that the Council should now consider whether there are additional ways of influencing the South African Government to turn away from *apartheid* and respect the political and civil rights of all the people of South Africa.

21. At the same time the Council must consider most carefully and responsibly the consequences of its actions. The Council must not abdicate its responsibilities by pursuing measures—whatever their popular appeal—which would in practice be counterproductive. Certain suggestions which are frequently aired would, in our view, exacerbate the situation in South and southern Africa and could cause grave damage to States neighbouring South Africa. The Council must pay scrupulous attention to the Charter of the United Nations and must not lightly enter into areas such as the measures provided in Chapter VII.

22. We are in principle opposed to trade sanctions. Wide economic sanctions are difficult to enforce, lead to a hardening of views and tend to harm those who are poorest and most vulnerable. Trade, on the other hand, is a channel for widening mutual understanding and for exercising a moderating influence.

23. By adopting a non-mandatory resolution directed against importers, the Council has pursued a realistic course. Let me stress that my own Government does not import arms from South Africa. I trust that the same is true for other members of the Council. Our message as a Council to States outside this organ is that they should follow suit.

24. My delegation has co-operated closely with the representative of the Netherlands over this resolution. We expressed to him the hope that he could find a text which would command unanimous support, and we made specific suggestions to this effect. We are glad that he has succeeded, and I would like to pay tribute to him for the thoroughness and the skill with which he has consulted members of the Council and embodied the consensus of their views.

25. It is against this background that my delegation has supported the present resolution. In so doing we are also reflecting both our ineradicable opposition to *apartheid* and our specific disapproval of the actions of the South African Government in a recent and relevant case.

26. Mr. KRISHNAN (India): May I begin by extending to you, Sir, my warm felicitations on your assumption of the high office of President. The Council is fortunate to have a diplomat of your high calibre, eminent qualities and vast and varied experience to guide its affairs during this month. Age-old ties of friendship have characterized the relations between your country and mine, a friendship which has been deepened and broadened in our own generation as founder members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and fellow members of the Group of 77. I should like to assure you of my delegation's fullest co-operation.

27. I take this opportunity also to pay a tribute to our President for last month, Mr. Ling Qing, for the exemplary manner in which he conducted our proceedings.

28. My delegation considers that it is important to prevent the import of arms and ammunition and related material produced in South Africa. It therefore voted in favour of the resolution which seeks to apply such an interdiction. At the same time, my delegation would like to stress that this interdiction is only one aspect of the mandatory arms embargo imposed by resolution 418 (1977), the implementation of which still reveals many serious loopholes and deficiencies.

29. It is a matter of deep concern to my delegation that the report submitted in September 1980 by the Council Committee has remained unattended to and that the Council, for reasons which I need not go into now, has been prevented from taking any action on the various recommendations made in it.

30. The arms embargo needs to be scrupulously respected, consistently applied and strictly enforced. We urge that the Council should soon find the necessary will to address this matter in a meaningful and effective manner.

31. In relation to the resolution we have just adopted: while my delegation greatly appreciates the devoted efforts made by the delegation of the Netherlands, particularly Mr. van der Stoel himself, to accommodate our concerns and suggestions and to arrive at a compromise acceptable to all, we would nevertheless have preferred to see some more improvements made in certain paragraphs. Notably, in paragraph 2 we would have liked to see included the phrase "and related material of all types".

32. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) [*interpretation from Russian*]: May I first of all congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the important post of President. We are certain that, with your tremendous diplomatic experience, the Security Council has in you a true leader.

33. I take this opportunity also to express our gratitude to the representative of China, Mr. Ling Qing, for his skilful and distinguished leadership and conduct of the work of the Council last month.

34. Today the Council is dealing with just a part of that extremely important problem to which a solution is demanded by the whole of civilized mankind: the problem of *apartheid* in South Africa. Today's question is just the visible tip of the iceberg. Many resolutions of the United Nations have branded *apartheid* as a crime against humanity, as a threat to international peace and security. The Council has repeatedly called on the Pretoria authorities to put an end to the policy of *apartheid* and to grant all citizens of South Africa full and equal political and other rights.

35. Nevertheless, the racist Pretoria régime, in open defiance of United Nations resolutions, has persisted in its policy. That régime not only visits tremendous suffering upon the people of South Africa, but is creating a genuine and growing threat to international peace and security. The policy of aggression, destabilization and State terrorism pursued by South Africa against the independent States of the region, as well as the continuing illegal occupation of Namibia, have seriously aggravated the situation.

36. Guided, as always, by its policy of principle in the matter of the struggle against the racist policy of *apartheid* pursued by South Africa, the Soviet Union believes that decisive measures must be taken to isolate that régime politically, economically and militarily. The Soviet Union supported Council resolution 418 (1977) under which all States were to cease forthwith any provision to South Africa of arms and military *matériel* of all types. What is important is not only to confirm this resolution but to supplement it in order to ensure strict and scrupulous compliance. Concrete steps must be taken to eliminate the loopholes in the embargo and to make it as comprehensive as possible. We believe, too, that we must supplement the existing embargo against South Africa by prohibiting imports of weapons and military *matériel* of all types manufactured in South Africa. That is what has been done here today. We hope that this will prove to be a useful measure that will promote the further isolation of the South African régime.

37. Nevertheless, since the racist régime of South Africa is continuing strenuously to build up its military power, the measures to which I have referred are clearly not enough in themselves. The Soviet Union therefore supports the long-standing and insistent demand by the African countries for the application by the Council against South Africa of the sanctions provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. That would be the most effective means of securing compliance with United Nations decisions on the granting of independence to Namibia and the elimination of the outrageous system of *apartheid*. It is precisely this kind of approach—and not "constructive engagement" with the racist régime, which serves only to encourage Pretoria—that is in keeping with the interests of the coloured and black population of South Africa, the interests of the people of Namibia, the interests of the independent African countries and the interests of the whole of civilized mankind.

38. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic)*: I now call on Mr. Shah Nawaz, representative of Pakistan and Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 421 (1977) concerning the question of South Africa.

39. Mr. SHAH NAWAZ (Pakistan): It is a great pleasure for me, Sir, to see a person of your eminence and distinction, from the brotherly Islamic and non-aligned country of Egypt with which Pakistan enjoys relations of close friendship, preside over the deliberations of the Council for the month of December. I have had the privilege of working closely with you in the United Nations and have profound respect and admiration for your experience and qualities of statesmanship, which I am confident will prove to be a great asset to the Council in the successful conduct of its business during the month of December.

40. I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the excellent manner in which your predecessor, Mr. Ling Qing of China, conducted the work of the Council last month.

41. The privilege of serving as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 421 (1977) concerning the question of South Africa has taught me to be modest in my expectations regarding that Committee, which functions under constraints familiar to all of us. It is therefore a matter of deep gratification to me to see the unanimous adoption by the Council today of resolution 558 (1984), prohibiting imports of arms, ammunition of all types and military vehicles from South Africa. This idea, which was mooted and matured in the Committee, has now come to fruition in the shape of a mandatory Council resolution. This is the first time since the adoption of reso-

lutions 418 (1977) and 421 (1977) that the Council has taken a decision relating to the need to curb the growth of South Africa's military capability which sustains its *apartheid* policies and encourages its aggressive designs on the southern African region.

42. This decision, which is a shot in the arm for the Committee on the arms embargo against South Africa, owes its origin and fruition to the dedicated efforts of Mr. van der Stoel of the Netherlands. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge his valuable contribution as we express our satisfaction over the result achieved today.

43. It is our hope that the adoption of resolution 558 (1984) will be the prelude to a meaningful consideration by the Council of the recommendations contained in the report of the Council Committee [*S/14179*] presented nearly four years ago. The comprehensive measures recommended by the Committee, following a process of thorough investigation and study spanning a period of more than two years, are vital for the effective enforcement of the arms embargo against South Africa and the implementation of the mandatory sanctions decided upon by the Council in its resolution 418 (1977). Non-action by the Council vitiates the intent of its own decision and impairs the capacity of the Committee effectively to carry out its mandate.

44. As determined by the Committee's report, illicit transfers of arms and related materials to South Africa continue to take place through clandestine operations, in circumvention of the arms embargo. This situation is not likely to change until the comprehensive measures recommended by the Committee are approved by the Council and concrete steps are taken to implement them. The broad range of measures recommended by the Committee in themselves indicate the presence of loopholes in the existing arrangements for enforcing the mandatory arms embargo and the limitations on the capacity of the Committee to carry out its mandate.

45. Under the circumstances, the functions of the Committee have been largely restricted to compiling data and obtaining information on breaches of the arms embargo and bringing these to the notice of the States concerned for appropriate remedial action. In carrying out this task, the Committee has mostly relied on information gleaned from the international media and from its contacts with non-governmental agencies and organizations. The Committee continues to be deprived of independent resources to investigate and establish violations of the arms embargo.

46. In the resolution adopted today, the Council requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on progress in its implementation. This will impose on the Committee the additional task of monitoring violations of the embargo on imports of arms from South Africa. If the Committee is to fulfil its dual mandate flowing from resolution 421 (1977) and from this resolution, it will need to be revitalized and its capacity will need to be enhanced. For the achievement of that purpose, the following are indispensable: first, meaningful action by the Council on the report of its Committee on the arms embargo against South Africa; secondly, provision of adequate resources to enable the Committee effectively to monitor and verify breaches of the arms embargo against South Africa, as well as imports of arms from that country and thirdly, willingness on the part of all the Council members to act with due concern and a sense of commitment to strengthen the arms embargo against South Africa and to respond effectively to such breaches.

47. The co-operation of all the Council members is obviously the essential requirement for the effective and smooth working of the Committee. The impasse in virtually every aspect of the Council's work is the product of the absence of such co-operation. Yet the mandate of the Committee on the arms embargo is of such fundamental importance that giving in to despair is impermissible, and expectations of genuine co-operation from all Member States for its fulfilment remain fully justified. Opposition to *apartheid* and the struggle against it are moral imperatives that should transcend political considerations. An important element in this struggle is the containment of South Africa's military capability, which sustains *apartheid*, nourishes aggression against neighbouring countries and encourages defiance of the United Nations.

48. This is the last month of Pakistan's current tenure of a place on the Security Council and of its chairmanship of the Council's Committee. We are grateful for the opportunity we have had of serving the Committee and helping it in any way we could in carrying out its responsibilities.

49. Today's successful adoption by the Council of resolution 558 (1984), on the recommendation of the Committee, is an encouraging sign creating the hope that, with the passage of time, the Committee will gain in strength and become fully capable of meeting the expectations that flow from its mandate.

50. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic)*: As no other member of the Council wishes to speak, I now call on the representative of South Africa to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

51. Mr. von SCHIRNDING (South Africa): Permit me on behalf of the South African delegation, Sir, to convey to you our best wishes on your assumption of the presidency.

52. I wish at the outset to place on record that my delegation's request to participate in this debate naturally presupposed that we would speak before, and not after, the vote had been taken, and we find the procedure adopted most irregular. I informed you, Mr. President, of my objection prior to the convening of this meeting.

53. It is ironic that the Council should have been convened today to consider the draft resolution just adopted, which has as its aim the extension of the arms embargo in order to obstruct the export of arms by South Africa. It is ironic because the development of South Africa's armament industry into a thriving, modern, technologically advanced component of South Africa's industrial complex—an industry which today provides employment for thousands of South Africans of all races, colours and creeds—traces its very origin to the arms embargo against South Africa decreed by the Council in 1977 [*resolution 418 (1977)*].

54. The original arms embargo was an ill-conceived attempt to destroy South Africa's capacity to exercise its basic right to self-defence, a right which, throughout the history of mankind, has not been in dispute—not to this very day. It was thought at the time that by instituting the arms embargo against my country, South Africa would be dealt a serious blow. Did the members of the Council really believe that South Africa would meekly succumb to such a threat?

55. What was the outcome of that futile resolution? South Africa created an efficient industry for the manufacture of arms of all types necessary for its self-defence, with the result that we are today self-sufficient in a number of important armaments sectors, and we will be increasingly so tomorrow. The representative of the Netherlands is quite right: we are proud of our achievement; we have made no attempt to hide it. That, in a nutshell, is what the arms embargo of 1977 achieved. In fact, the momentum created was sufficient to enable South Africa, in a relatively short period of time, to participate internationally—and with growing success—in the highly competitive field of arms exports.

56. Apparently that state of affairs is not palatable to certain arms-exporting nations which, it would seem, feel threatened by the competition from South Africa and now shelter behind the resolution just adopted, by endeavouring to disguise their efforts through irrelevant and virtuous-sounding exhortations which have not the slightest bearing on the situation. The sponsors of the resolution should not delude themselves or the members of the Council. Let me state unequivocally that the development of South Africa's arms industry will continue to keep pace with the requirements of our self-defence. We will not be deterred—not for one instant—by this or any further attempts by the Council to prevent South Africa from exercising the fundamental responsibility which we owe to all our peoples, namely, that of self-defence.

57. It is an illusion to believe that an attempt to hinder the export of arms by South Africa will succeed, and it is an illusion to believe that our arms industry will thereby be hampered.

58. Have the members of the Council considered the precedent which they have set this afternoon by adopting the resolution before us? Which State will be the next to have its right to engage in free trade and to sell its material and technology on the open market infringed by the Council? Rather than singling out South Africa for its legitimate free-market activities, the Council should be addressing itself to the sinister and disruptive activities of the Soviet Union and its allies, which are the largest suppliers of arms to dissident movements in Africa, Latin America and elsewhere in their unceasing attempts to destabilize those regions for their own political ends.

59. The statement made this afternoon by the representative of the Soviet Union fooled nobody. It would have come as no particular surprise had the initial momentum for the adoption of the resolution come from those quarters. It is highly regrettable that instead the initiative should have come from the Netherlands, a country from which a greater sense of responsibility might have been expected. No doubt there are commercial and domestic political considerations which persuaded the Netherlands Government to embark on that course. It is a course which it and the other sponsors of this resolution may come to regret.

60. The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic)*: The Council has thus concluded this stage in its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

Litho in United Nations, New York 00300 90-61313—February 1993—2,050